

USDA Foreign Agricultural Service

GAIN Report

Global Agricultural Information Network

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POLICY

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Approved By:

Ron Verdonk

Prepared By:

Mohamed Hamza & Ahmed Wally

Report Highlights:

News on developments in agriculture and food in Egypt.

Nile Nuggets

*News on Developments in Agriculture and Food in Egypt
May 2014*

SOMETIMES THE MEAT YOU EAT...: Egypt's Ministry of Agriculture and Land Reclamation (MALR) has released its first report classifying governorates whose food establishments including processing facilities, restaurants and stores sell meat unfit for human consumption. Cairo came out at the top of the list with 3,373 violations reported in 2013. The report classified the governorates into four categories from those with the highest number of infractions to those with the fewest violations. Official sources from the ministry said the Ministries of Local Development, Supply, Trade, Industry and Investment and MALR have agreed to intensify monitoring of stores and processors to limit violations. In terms of findings, the report points out the following eight governorates had the highest number of violations: (Cairo - 30 percent, Beheira - 15 percent, Gharbiya - 10 percent, Giza - 8 percent, Sharqiya - 6 percent, followed by Alexandria, Damietta and Kafr El-Sheikh). The report also showed that two governorates, Red Sea and North Sinai, had zero violations during 2013.

SAY, IS THAT BEEF YOU'RE EATING FROM MATO GROSSO?: Egypt has temporarily banned beef originating from the Brazilian state of Mato Grosso for 180 days. The ban came after Brazil's Ministry of Agriculture confirmed on May 9, 2014, that testing by a laboratory in the United Kingdom had confirmed that a 12-year-old cow from Mato Grosso state, that had been on its way to being slaughtered, was infected with atypical Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE), commonly known as mad cow disease. According to media reporting, the Brazilian Ministry of Agriculture said that Brazilian beef exports to Egypt for the first four months of 2014 totaled 48,450 TMT with shipments from Mato Grosso state representing 25 percent of total exports or 12,074 TMT. Since 2001, Egypt has been a major market for Brazilian fresh beef, and imports have averaged 110,000 MT annually for the last five years.

SISI PROMISES TO RECLAIM 4 MILLION ACRES OF LAND: Presidential candidate Abdel Fattah Al-Sisi said that his platform includes the reclamation of 4m acres of land, adding that the availability of good soil and the access to water will make this a possibility. Al-Sisi's plan targets offering between 50,000 and 100,000 acres of land currently considered national territory to various Egyptian governorates to help with housing, agriculture and industrial projects, he said. The distribution of these lands would be overseen by the state, he added. For agriculture, Egypt currently uses 8.5 million acres nationwide.

CENTRAL BANK FREES UP FOREX TO EASE FOOD IMPORTS: Egypt's Central Bank offered \$1.1 billion in an exceptional foreign currency auction on May 14, 2014, to allow banks to meet demand for hard currency needed to pay for food imports. Egypt has been suffering from a sustained dollar shortage stemming from the past three years of political and economic instability. Egypt's foreign reserves rose to \$17.49 billion in April 2014 from \$17.41 billion in March but are still markedly lower than the \$36 billion seen before the 2011 revolution. Egypt's tight finances have hindered payments for food and commodities during April-May 2014.